

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1156

As Passed House:

February 23, 2009

Title: An act relating to creating a preference in the alternative route certification program for veterans and national guard members.

Brief Description: Creating a preference in the alternative route certification program for veterans and national guard members.

Sponsors: Representatives Anderson, Sullivan, Priest, Haigh, Quall, Dammeier, McCune, Wallace, Kelley and Herrera.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 2/3/09, 2/13/09 [DP].

Floor Activity

Passed House: 2/23/09, 96-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates a preference in the alternative route teacher certification programs for veterans and National Guard members.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; Probst, Vice Chair; Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Hope, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Cox, Dammeier, Hunt, Johnson, Lias, Maxwell, Orwall, Santos and Sullivan.

Staff: Cece Clynch (786-7195)

Background:

Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification.

School districts, or districts in cooperation with an educational service district, operate partnerships with one or more higher education teacher preparation programs to provide performance-based alternative routes aimed at recruiting candidates to teach in subject matter

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and geographic shortage areas. Each district or consortia must apply to the Public Educator Standards Board (PESB) for approval of the alternative route program or programs they want to offer, identify the approved teacher preparation program with which they are partnering and provide assurances with respect to the mentoring which will be provided. The PESB, with support from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, selects school districts and consortia of districts to receive statewide partnership grant funds to provide one or more of the alternative route programs.

The first four of these programs are known as Routes One, Two, Three, and Four:

- Route One is designed for classified employees with an associate's degree and three years work experience in Washington schools seeking certification in special education or English as a Second Language (ESL). It is anticipated that candidates earn bachelor's degrees and certification in two years or less.
- Route Two is designed for classified employees with a bachelor's degree and three years experience in Washington schools seeking certification in a subject matter or geographic shortage area. It is anticipated that candidates earn certification in one year or less.
- Route Three is designed for individuals with a bachelor's degree, subject matter expertise in a shortage area, and five years experience in the workforce seeking certification in a subject matter or geographic shortage area. It is anticipated that candidates earn certification in one year or less.
- Route Four is designed for individuals with a bachelor's degree who are currently teaching subjects identified as core academic subjects under the federal No Child Left Behind Act under conditional or emergency substitute certificates. It is anticipated that candidates earn certification in one year or less.

Two other alternative routes to teacher certification were created in 2007:

- The Pipeline for Paraeducators program is for individuals with at least three years of classroom experience but without a college degree. Upon completion of an associate's degree, the candidate is eligible to enroll in a Route One alternative route program to obtain a mathematics, special education, or ESL teaching certificate.
- The Retooling to Teach Mathematics and Science program is for current teachers and individuals who are not employed as teachers but who have an elementary teaching certificate. These individuals pursue a middle level or secondary mathematics or science endorsement through one of the PESB's pathways to endorsement. Candidates with an elementary teaching certificate who are not employed as teachers can seek only a middle level endorsement.

The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) administers the conditional scholarships applicable to the alternative route programs. The PESB selects the scholarship recipients.

Conditional Scholarship Programs.

A conditional scholarship is a loan that is forgiven in whole or in part in exchange for service as a certificated teacher employed in a Washington K-12 public school. The state forgives one year of loan obligation for every two years a recipient teaches in a public school. Recipients who fail to complete the program or cease to teach in a public school are required to repay the remaining loan principal with interest and any applicable fees.

Summary of Bill:

Applicants for alternative route programs who are eligible veterans or National Guard members, and who otherwise meet the entry requirements for the program for which application is made, are given preference in admission and for scholarships.

"Eligible veteran or National Guard member" is defined as "a Washington domiciliary who was an active or reserve member of the United States military or naval forces, or a National Guard member called to active duty, who served in active federal service, under either Title 10 or Title 32 of the United States Code, in a war or conflict fought on foreign soil or in international waters or in another location in support of those serving on foreign soil or in international waters, and if discharged from service, has received an honorable discharge." Titles 10 and 32 of the United States Code encompass the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Reserve, and National Guard.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Over the next 10 years, many current teachers will retire and will need to be replaced. The alternative routes programs provide multiple opportunities for people to enter the teaching profession. Veterans have lots of education, training, and experience in math, science, liberal arts, and career and technical fields. As long as they meet the qualifications and criteria, veterans should be given preference in these alternative routes programs.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Anderson, prime sponsor; David Brenna, Professional Educator Standards Board; and Tom Wicorek, Veterans Legislative Coalition.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.